

I'm not okay 나는 괜찮지 않아  
I'm not okay by Inyoung Lee

Sound: Mind the gap voice (tube)

I.

*Mind the gap. Which gap?*

I'm not okay.

To pretend that I'm okay.

I'm not okay

To say I'm always happy and satisfied with everything.

I used to try to be nice to everyone to overcome my lack of self-esteem.

I was not okay.

I was worried about what people might think about me if I say "No, it's not okay." So I always said, "Yes! I'm totally okay with this."

When I first came to London, you treated me like a stupid Asian woman who doesn't speak native English.

Please don't say hello to me 你好 nǐhǎo (in Chinese) or こんにちは (in Japanese). We don't speak Chinese and Japanese. We speak Korean and it's a completely different language!

I'm not skinny like the K-pop idol girls you saw on music videos.

I'm not North Korean and please don't ask me how's Kim Jung Eun. I don't know anything about him personally.

I look very young but I'm not 20. Please don't judge me by my appearance.

I was trying to be a good person. But it was not always good.

I was lonely and sad when nobody cared about me and I was invisible.

It's not okay when I am alone, especially at night.

I'm sick of being lonely.

I'm sick of eating alone.

Hey, I don't think I'm okay with this! Can you be polite to me just like I am to you?

I'm not representing all Asians. I am just myself. So please don't attack me. This shitty virus has nothing to do with me.

I am also feeling ill sometimes.

During this lockdown, I have no family members in this country. Who will take me to the hospital if I am really unwell? One day I called the emergency number and he asked me thousands of questions about my symptoms by phone and I was almost dying to answer but he kept listing all the medical terms which I couldn't understand at all and said: "in order to get prescriptions, you need blah blah blah..."

Please, can you stop it? I just need Antibiotics! That's all!!

I miss my mom. I can't sleep.

I can feel my tears running down my cheeks.

The English sentence I speak most frequently is 'I'm sorry'.

But you know what? I'm not sorry.

It's not my fault.

Please respect my boundaries and let me do what makes me feel safe and comfortable.

Please don't ignore me when I don't understand your context, that's not because of my English that's because of a cultural difference.

It's not my fault. I've lived in a different country for 40 years.

Please don't think I'm very shy, quiet and humble.

Please don't say I'm always a good listener. I love talking and I am very tired of listening all the time while you guys are all talking loudly at the same time. Can you please talk one at a time?

Thank you for helping me out. But I don't need your help. I can do it by myself.

I have the freedom to go and stay where I want to be.

Hey, can you please not interrupt me while I'm explaining? I can't speak as fast as you are.

But I'm still speaking.

Do not try to take more money from me. Do you think I am an idiot?

Do not try to steal my phone. I am in Oxford street. It doesn't mean that I'm a "Crazy Rich Asian." Do you think I'm a tourist? No. I'm just a migrant.

I'm terrified when I am applying for a visa even if I didn't do anything wrong.

I feel I'm judged by you and you are superior to me.

I'm an actor. I can play many roles, not just funny, rich Chinese women (do you remember? I'm not Chinese!) I have empathy and humanity, not just an accent.

Why are accents sooooo important to you? Look at the people around you. They all have a different accent.

Please LET Me have "EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES".

Let me play Shakespeare in my own voice.

I am confused about where I am and who I am in the middle of this city. I don't know why I am here and where to go.

I can't stay and I can't go. I feel like I belong nowhere.

Sound: This train has been held at a red signal

II.

*Who am I? Let's fill in the gaps!*

I love Harold Pinter, Sarah Kane and Ken Loach, and Richard Curtis's films, just like you, also I'm a big fan of Radiohead and Amy Winehouse and I love to talk about them with you.

I can spend the whole night talking about art, music, theatre, films and travel.

These are the things that make me happy. That's my life!

I love dogs and pubs.

I love Guinness.

I love blueberry scones with English Breakfast tea.

When the coffee smell is waking me up I start thinking of you.

It was a foggy winter day when I first met you, I fell down, you held my hands. I saw your eyes and now I can smell you, touch you, hear you and taste you.

We share the same breath and dream.

I am dreaming to live with you in a house with a pretty garden with our puppy, not in this student accommodation of small cube-like boxes.

When I open the curtains, the sunlight comes into the bed. We start the day with a morning kiss.

You are the person who makes me alive and wakes me up in the morning.

I am liberal and can also talk about my sexuality.

I am fat and love my ass.

I want to be a brave woman.

I want to face the truth.

I know how to be angry.

I know how to shout in front of other people.

I can write.

I can cry.

I can speak and express my opinion and have no problem communicating in English if you bother listening to my accent.

I can speak two languages. Can you?

I can choose where I want my life to be.

Let's celebrate our identity and freedom.

I deserve happiness.

I feel happy when I play the piano. Let's play the piano.

I can dance with you.

I have a sense of humour and love to make you laugh.

I am okay with being disliked because you are lying next to me.

I can cry because you can now wipe my tears.

You can be my true friend.

I am not alone so I am okay.

I'm proud of being different.

Let me speak the truth and be myself.

I fight for life.

I am happy as I am.

I think I am okay now.

I am okay when I'm with you.

I can go anywhere with you. I can go anywhere with you..

I can go anywhere...

I can go anywhere...

Sound: Tube Arriving sound/